

1748.

THE
Villanous PRINCIPLES
OF THE
RIGHTS
OF THE
Christian CHURCH
ASSERTED, &c.

Confuted by SCRIPTURE.

I T I M. iv. 1.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressely, that in the latter times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils.

L O N D O N :

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1708.

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THE
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SINCE the Book, falsely called, *The Rights of the Christian Church Asserted, &c.* has been so much talk'd of, and by some applauded for one of the best Books this Age has produc'd; and since Monsieur Le Clerc, a profess'd Deist and Latitudinarian, has been prevail'd upon to recommend the Principles of it, it can't be amiss to acquaint the World with some of the Tenets of that Author; how blasphemous towards God, how dangerous to Church

and State, and how repugnant to holy Scripture they are, that so every one who would approve himself a Loyal and Dutiful Subject, or a zealous Christian, may use his best Endeavours to suppress such abominable Principles, as must necessarily be attended with the worst of Practices, if they should once come to prevail.

This is a Cause which every good Man, that has any value for Religion, ought to espouse; neither *Whigg*, nor *Tory* are unconcern'd in it, for the Set of Principles recommended in that Book, tend to overthrow all Religion, and are directly levell'd as well against the Presbyterian Ministry as the Episcopal: Nay, that Author does all he can to subvert Christianity it self, to introduce Blasphemy, Atheism, Deism, Anarchy, and Confusion, as cannot but appear to every Impartial Judge, that has read the Bible and that Book. But to save you the Trouble of making the Comparison, take the following Quotations out of the Book of the *Rights*, and the Texts of Scripture oppos'd to them; which are put together so concisely, as that they may fall within the Compass of a Penny Paper, and be a Conviction to the common sort of People, who may not peruse a larger Volume; That the Principles of the Book of the *Rights*,

First, Subvert the most Sacred and Religious Ordinances.

Secondly, Are full of Blasphemy against God. And,

Thirdly, Promote Rebellion against the Queen's Majesty and Government.

First, They subvert the most Sacred and Religious Ordinances; as these following Proofs plainly evidence.

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P. 132. ' The Office of Preaching, which the Clergy now appropriate to themselves, ought to be as in the Apostles time, in common, when every one had a Right to exercise.

P. 135. ' The same Argument may be urg'd for the Laity's baptizing, the Command given to the Apostles no more excluding them from that, than from Preaching and receiving the Sacrament.

P. 137. ' If every Christian is capable of performing the Substantials of Religion, &c. it is absurd to imagine, he is not capable of such Circumstances; as praying aloud, distributing the Bread and Wine; or, according to the present Mode, sprinkling an Infant, and repeating a Set Form of Words.

P. 108. ' Every one rightly consecrates the Elements to himself, and any thing further than this, is rather Consecration than Consecration:

1 Cor. 12. 28. *And God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles; secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers—* ver. 29. *Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers?* Ephes. 4. 11. *And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers.* v. 12. *For the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.*

Mal. 2. 7. *The Priest's Lips shall preserve Knowledge, and the People shall seek the Law at his Mouth; for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.*

Acts 13. 3. *The Holy Ghost said to the Prophets and Teachers that were in the Church of Antioch, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the Work whereunto I called them, and when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away; so they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia. And ver. 5. They preached the Word of God;*

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P. 108. ' Among Chri-
' stians one no more than
' another can be reckon'd
' a Priest from Scrip-
' ture—— The Clerk
' has as good a Title to
' the Priesthood, as the
' Parson. P. 109. A Pre-
' tence to a Priesthood,
' or sacrificing not in

Dr. Potter, in his *Discourse*
of *Church - Government*,
which is an unanswerable
confutation of the Book
of the *Rights*, plainly
proves, both from the
Acts and Epistles of the
Apostles, That in all Pla-
ces form'd into regular
Churches; there were Or-
ders of standing and fix'd
Ministers. P. 114. ' Paul
' and *Barnabas* return-
' ning to visit the Chur-
' ches which they had
' lately planted, or-
' dained Elders in every
' Church. *James*, who
' writes to the Twelve
' Tribes wherever scat-
' ter'd abroad, directs the
' Sick among them, to
' send for the Elders of
' the Church to pray over
' them, and anoint them
' with Oyl in the Name
' of the Lord: So that
' in all Places where
' the Twelve Tribes
' were dispers'd, and
' that was all over the
' *Roman Empire*, there
' were Elders when this
' Epistle was written.
' There was a Pres-
' bytery, or College
' of Elders, in the
' Place

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common to all Christians, is no small Piece of Priestcraft. P. 137. Lay-Men may exercise the Ecclesiastical Function.

P. 24. None has a Right to prescribe to another, but every one has a Negative; so that there's a perfect equality; for no Man has any more Power over another, than another has over him.

Place where *Timothy* was ordained; for it was by the Imposition of their Hands that he received his Orders. And 115. *Peter* who writes to the Strangers scatter'd through *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*, exhorts the Elders to feed the Flock of God, and the People to be obedient to their Elders, 1 Tim. 6. And these Elders are said to have the Oversight, which is to be Bishops of the Churches, and are spoken of as Governours; whence he exhorts them not to behave themselves as Lords over the Flock. St. Paul having called the Elders of *Ephesus* to *Miletus*, gives them a solemn Charge to take Care of the Flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them Overseers, or Bishops; so that here are Elders, called Bishops, and intrusted with the

Care of the Church.

St. Paul tells *Titus*, that he had left him in *Crete* to ordain Elders in every City, and advises him to ordain none but such as are blameless, for which he gives this Reason, that a Bishop must be blameless, as being the Steward of God: So that in all the Cities of *Crete* there were to be Elders, and they also seem to be called Bishops, and to be intrusted with the Government of God's Church, as his Stewards and Vicegerents. In the first Epistle to *Timothy*, Elders are several times mention'd, with Characters of Distinction from other Christians, whom they are said to rule 1 *Tim.* 1. 17, 19. and Rules are prescribed to *Timothy* for his Conduct in the Ordination of Bishops and Deacons 1 *Tim.* 3. Lastly, the Epistle to the *Philippians* is directed to the Bishops, Deacons and Saints at *Philippi*, ver. 1. whence it is manifest, that here also

also, besides the Christian People, who are called Saints, as they are in other Places, there were two Orders of Ministers, distinguish'd by the Names of Bishops and Deacons. From these Passages of Scripture, it is evident, beyond Dispute, that besides the Apostles, there were in the first Age of the Church at least two Orders of fix'd and standing Ministers, and that every one had not a Right to exercise the Office of preaching, baptizing, praying aloud, distributing the Bread and Wine, repeating a set Form of Words, consecrating the Elements, and governing the Church, *Heb. 5. 4. No Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* And let all such as dare invade the sacred Office read and tremble, *2 Chron. 26. 18, 19. It pertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn Incense unto the Lord, but unto the Priests that are consecrated to burn Incense: go out of the*

*the Sanctuary, for thou hast
 trespassed—— Then Uz-
 ziah was wrath, and had a
 Censer in his hand to burn
 Incense; and while he was
 wrath with the Priests, the
 Leprosy even rose up in his
 Forehead, before the Priests
 in the House of the Lord—
 And he hasted to go out,
 because the Lord had smit-
 ten him; and Uzziah the
 King was a Leper unto the
 Day of his Death. And,
 Numb. 16. when the Peo-
 ple gathered themselves to-
 gether against Moses and
 Aaron, and said, Yetake
 too much upon you, see-
 ing all the Congregation are
 holy everyone of them, and
 the Lord is among them;
 wherefore then lift you up
 your selves above the Con-
 gregation of the Lord. Be-
 cause of this they were
 not to die the common
 Death of all Men; for
 since God had sent them,
 and they wickedly de-
 ny'd their Authority,
 God was so provoked,
 that the Earth open'd her
 Mouth, and swallowed them
 up, and their Houses, and
 all the Men that appertain-
 ed to Korah, and all their
 Goods,*

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Goods, they and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the Pit, and the Earth clos'd upon them, and they perish'd from among the Congregation.

The second Thing the Author of the Book of the *Rights* is tax'd with, is down-right Blasphemy against God, and giving the Lye to the Holy Scriptures.

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P. 151. 'One grand Cause of Mistake, is, not considering when God acts as Governour of the Universe, and when as Prince of a particular Nation. The *Jews*, when they came out of the Land of Bondage, were under no settled Government, till God was pleas'd to offer himself to be their King, to which all the People expressly consented, &c.

Exod. 3. 11. When God sent *Moses* to deliver *Israel*, and to be Governour over them, he bids him tell them, *I am hath sent me unto you: I who am the God of your Fathers, who necessarily exist of my self.* 'Twas enough that the great God of Heaven and Earth had sent him. And upon that Authority, (*ver. 18. They shall hearken to thy Voice*) submit to his Government. Thus did God settle a Government over the *Jews* by *Moses*, without any express Consent of theirs, and before they came out of the Land of Bondage.
So

So also God settled the Priesthood upon *Aaron*, and his Sons, and made it Death for any one that was not of the Family to invade their Office. *Numb. 1. 50, 51. Thou shalt appoint the Levites over the Tabernacles, and over all Things that belong to it, and they shall minister unto it, the Stranger that cometh nigh; any one that is not of the Tribe of Levi, that shall dare to minister about holy Things, shall be put to Death.* This settling the Priesthood upon *Aaron*, and appointing the several Sacrifices among them, was done by God's peremptory Command, without any express Consent of the Peoples; and it was not in their Power to alter either of them. *Chap. 3. ver. 45. The Levites shall be mine, I am the Lord.* 'Twas enough the Lord said it: Upon that Authority, they were so influenc'd, that, *Chap. 1. ver. 54. The Children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses,*

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so did they. Thus instead of being under no settled Government, when they came out of the Land of Bondage, and being at Liberty to choose or reject God from being their King. Instead of God's Offering Himself to their Choice, they were under his absolute Authority and Government by *Moses*, in Civil Matters, and the Tribe of *Levi* in Ecclesiastical. It was enough that, as *Moses* told them, *Numb. 6. 15. The Lord thy God is a jealous God among you (and therefore they were to obey) lest the Anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the Face of the Earth.*

Exod. 4: 29, 30. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the Elders of the Children of Israel, and Aaron spake all the Words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the Signs in the sight of the People, and the People believed, and bowed their Heads and worshipped.

Thus

P. 312. ' God did not miraculously interpose among the *Jews*, till they had chose him for their King.

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Thus did God Miraculously interpose among the *Jews*, by working Wonders ; as, by turning *Moses's* Rod into Serpent , making his Hand leprous. And they did not believe the two Signs, by taking the Water of the River, and pouring it upon the dry Land, which should become Blood upon the dry Land : So that God did Miraculously interpose among the *Jews* before they had chose him for their King. Tho' the Author of the *Rights* so impudently asserts the contrary.

Thirdly, The Principles of the Book of the *Rights* promote Rebellion against the Queen's Majesty and Government.

P. 233. ' The Reason
' why People may, upon
' just Grounds, with-
' draw their Allegiance
' from the Civil Magi-
' strate, is, because all
' the Power he has, is
' given him by them, in
' order to act for their
' Good, and they who
' depute him, must needs
' reserve to themselves a

Rom. 13. 1. *Let every
Soul be Subject unto the
higher Powers, for there is
no Power but of God; the
Powers that be are ordained
of God.*

Ver. 2. *Whosoever there-
fore resisteth the Power, re-
sisteth the Ordinance of God,
and they that resist, shall
receive to themselves Dam-
nation.*

Ver.

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Power to judge, whether their Deputy acts according to the Trust lodg'd in him.

P. 26. He says, ' All Neighbours and fellow-Citizens are obliged, by the common Ties of Humanity, to assist one another in opposing their Deputies, when they act not according to the Trust lodg'd in them, who by betraying the highest Trust, become the greatest and basest of Traitors.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for Conscience sake.*

1. Pet. 2. 13. *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King as Supreme; or unto Governours, as unto them that are sent by him for the Punishment of Evil-doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.*

Tit. 3. 1. *Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, to be ready to every good work,*

The villanous Principles of the Book of the *Rights* being thus evidently repugnant to Scripture, it is to be hop'd, every good Christian will do all that lies in his power to discountenance, and bring to condign Punishment, the wilful Publishers, Author, Printer, and Abettors of such abominable Tenets, as directly Affront and Provoke God; and destroy all Religion, and prepare Men's Minds for Sedition and Rebellion.

That God would infatuate and defeat the Counsels of all such, abate their Pride, assuage their Malice, and confound their Devices; That he would strengthen the Hands of our Gracious Sovereign, Queen **ANNE** and all that are put in Authority under her, with Judgment and Justice, to cut

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cut off all such Workers of Iniquity, as turn Religion into Rebellion, and Faith into Faction, that they may never triumph in the Ruin of his Church among us: But that our Gracious Sovereign and her Realms may be preserv'd in his true Religion; and by his merciful Goodness protected in the same, is the hearty Prayer of all true Lovers of the Reformed Religion among us.



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